



May 5, 2006

New Hampshire man is sentenced to ten years in prison for guarding cocaine

A federal judge has sentenced **Clifford T. Falla**, of Wolfboro, New Hampshire, to ten years in prison for guarding two shipments of purported cocaine that were being stored temporarily in Rhode Island hotel rooms. He was actually guarding fake cocaine for undercover FBI agents posing as drug traffickers.

United States Attorney Robert Clark Corrente announced the sentence, which U.S. District Court Judge William E. Smith imposed today in U.S. District Court, Providence.

In December, Judge Smith sentenced **Robert Nardolillo**, of Providence, to 15 years for arranging the security for the shipments. Last month, Judge Smith sentenced **Anthony Gobbi**, of Boston, to 160 months in prison for his role in guarding one of the shipments.

Nardolillo and Falla both pleaded guilty to conspiracy and related charges in connection with the fake cocaine shipments. In October, a jury found Gobbi guilty of taking part in one of the security details.

At Nardolillo's plea hearing last August, Assistant U.S. Attorneys James H. Leavey said that, in January 2001, an undercover FBI agent asked Nardolillo if he would provide protection for a multi-kilogram cocaine shipment. Nardolillo agreed to do so.

On April 30, 2001, Nardolillo sent Falla, armed with a pistol, to a hotel room to guard what was purported to be a shipment of 17 kilograms of cocaine. Meanwhile, Gobbi circled the

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hotel in a car. Undercover agents were in the room with Falla and others arrived to remove some of the purported cocaine, ostensibly for delivery in Rhode Island.

The undercover agent who had negotiated with Nardolillo paid him \$500 a kilogram for the security and Nardolillo in turn paid Falla and Gobbi.

The scenario was repeated in August 2001 at a different hotel with a purported shipment of 11 kilograms of cocaine. Nardolillo and Falla admitted their roles in guarding that shipment but the jury found Gobbi not guilty of taking part in that security detail.

The **Federal Bureau of Investigation**, the **Rhode Island State Police**, and **Providence Police** participated in the investigation. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Leavey and Adi Goldstein prosecuted the case.

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